

*Page 3, first full paragraph, replace with the following new paragraph:*

An example of a “backpack” oxygen carrying system designed for mountaineering is shown in U.S. Patent No. 5,400,934 to Ducros, in which a rucksack, or backpack, is adapted to make it possible to drink or inhale oxygen while walking. The rucksack includes two straps wherein at least one of its two straps defines a protective, isothermic inner space, for example, by means of a foldable protective band that is sewn on the upper half of the strap. A recipient is placed in the rucksack, and its tube passes in this protective space and finally terminates in a valve for drinking or inhaling.

*Page 5, third full paragraph, replace with the following new paragraph:*

The tank 12 is contained in a tank-holding assembly 14. The tank-holding assembly 14 is configured as a pouch 15 dimensioned to fit the tank 12, and can include additional features to accommodate accessories or guide tubes or cannulae for use with the tank 12. Although illustrated as a pouch 15, it is contemplated that the tank-holding assembly 14 can be provided as a rigid or semi-rigid housing surrounding a source of therapeutic fluid. In FIG. 1, a pocket 16 is provided to hold cannulae, masks, and the like. The pouch 14 can be fabricated from any suitable material. Such pouches are conventionally constructed from a fabric such as nylon, but it is contemplated that a pouch fabricated from a material such as neoprene would be advantageous.

*Page 6, first full paragraph, replace with the following new paragraph:*

A shoulder strap assembly 18 is attached to the pouch 15. The strap assembly 18 is configured to flex during movement of a human carrier of the tank

assembly 10 to such a degree that the perceived weight of the tank 12 is lessened. Examples of suitable straps can be seen in U.S. Patent Nos. 5,143,266 and 4,924,557 and 4,827,578 to Heckerman, U.S. Patent No. 4,976,388 to Coontz, and U.S. Patent No. 5,695,102 to Jackson, the specifications of which are incorporated by reference herein. It is to be understood that the strap 18 is merely illustrative, and that any strap meeting the requirements of the present invention can be employed.

*Page 6, second full paragraph, replace with the following new paragraph:*

The strap assembly 18 is constructed as a multi-element strap having a flexible section 20 flanked by a pair of structural sections 22, 24. In the illustrated example, the structural sections 22, 24 are fabricated from a material that has less or no elasticity in comparison to the material from which the flexible section 20 is made.

*Page 6, third full paragraph, replace with the following new paragraph:*

The first structural section 22 has a first end 26 secured to the tank pouch 14 and a second end 28 secured to the flexible section 20. The second structural section 24 has a first end 30 secured to the tank pouch 14 and a second end 32 secured to the flexible section 20.

*Page 6, fourth full paragraph, replace with the following new paragraph:*

As shown in FIG. 2, the flexible section 20 includes a flexible element 34 and an adjustably structural element 36 secured to the flexible element 34. The structural element 36 is longer than the flexible element 34, and is secured in overlaying relation to the flexible element 34. The flexible element can be